

Amendments to the Drawings:

The accompanying two (2) Replacement Sheets include changes to Figs. 1 and 2. These two sheets, which include Figs. 1 and 2, replace the original sheets including Figs. 1 and 2. In Figs. 1 and 2, an energy store has been explicitly shown. In addition, in Fig. 2, the "Control Unit Electronics" has been designated with reference numeral 17.

Support for the energy store being in connection with converters 5 and 13 can be found at, for example, fourth full paragraph of page 6 of the Substitute Specification. No new matter has been added, and the Replacement Sheets are supported by the present application, including the specification. Entry and approval is respectfully requested.

Attachments: 2 Replacement Sheets.

REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 9-16 are pending in the present application. Claim 9 has been amended. For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the indication that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

In response to the Examiner's objection to the drawings, Figs. 1 and 2 have been amended. No new matter has been added, and changes included in the Replacement Sheets are supported by the present application, including the specification. Entry of Replacement Figures 1 and 2 contained in the Replacement Sheets is respectfully requested, and withdrawal of the drawing objection is requested.

Rejection of Claims 9, 10 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 9, 10 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by German Patent 198 29 730 (hereinafter referred to as "Berberich et al." reference). The rejection is improper because Berberich et al. reference fails to identically disclose each of the claimed limitations.

Amended claim 9 recites, in relevant part, a **converter having an electrical isolation from a main electrical system**, wherein the converter is configured for supplying power to at least one component, at least one **coupling element having an electrical isolation from the main electrical system**, wherein the coupling element is configured to be connectable to the at least one component, the coupling element being used for data transmission, and a **ground connection assigned to the at least one component**. As described in the Substitute Specification, the converter is electrically isolated from the main electrical system, which includes the vehicle battery connected to vehicle ground. (Substitute Specification, p. 5, lines 13 to 18; Figures 1 and 2). In addition, the coupling element is also electrically isolated from the main electrical system. (Substitute Specification, p. 5, lines 20 to 22; Figures 1 and 2). In

contrast, Berberich et al. reference refers to a steering wheel assembly with a connecting device 1 in communication with an interface 3 via a converter (12c, 2, 13a). The connecting device and interface each includes a component (6, 6') and a coupling element (4, 10). The converter transmits serial signals between the interface and the connecting device, and supplies voltage from the main electrical system (onboard electrical network 12, 13) directly to both the interface and the connecting device. (Berberich et al., Abstract; and Figure 1). Berberich et al. reference does not indicate that the converter, which supplies voltage from the main electrical system, is electrically isolated from the main electrical system. In addition, Berberich et al. reference does not indicate that the coupling elements, which receive voltage from the main electrical system, are electrically isolated from the main electrical system. Furthermore, Berberich et al. reference does not disclose a ground connection assigned to the at least one component. Berberich et al. reference indicates components 6, 6' connected to the converter. However, nowhere does Berberich et al. reference indicate a ground connection assigned to these components. At most, Berberich et al. reference indicates ground connections only for the main electrical system. (Berberich et al., Figure 1).

For at least the foregoing reasons, the teachings of Berberich et al. reference would not anticipate claim 9 and its dependent claims 10 and 16.

Rejection of Claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Berberich et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,667,283 (hereinafter referred to as "Seki et al." reference). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons.

Claims 11 and 12 depend from claim 9. Seki et al. reference has not been asserted to overcome, and does not overcome, the shortcomings of Berberich et al. reference as applied against parent claim 9. Therefore, dependent claims 11 and 12 are allowable over the applied references.

Rejection of Claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Berberich et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,650,030 (hereinafter referred to as “Has” reference). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons.

Claim 13 depends from claim 9. Has reference has not been asserted to overcome, and does not overcome, the shortcomings of Berberich et al. reference as applied against parent claim 9. Therefore, dependent claim 13 is allowable over the applied references.

Rejection of Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Berberich et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,061,139 (hereinafter referred to as “Young et al.” reference). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons.

Claim 14 depends from claim 9. Young et al. reference has not been asserted to overcome, and does not overcome, the shortcomings of Berberich et al. reference as applied against parent claim 9. Therefore, dependent claim 14 is allowable over the applied references.

Rejection of Claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Berberich et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,725,242 (hereinafter referred to as “Belau et al.” reference). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons.

Claim 15 depends from claim 9. Belau et al. reference has not been asserted to overcome, and does not overcome, the shortcomings of Berberich et al. reference as applied against parent claim 9. Therefore, dependent claim 15 is allowable over the applied references.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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